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Boosting 4-H REenrollment



Let's aim for 75 percent
or higher reenrollment
every year

You'll find 15 ways inside!

A good sized 4-H Club . . .



N-17923.

and a happy, interested one, too—in a discussion led by one of its own members.

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Boosting 4-H REenrollment

Laurel K. Sabrosky, Extension Analyst

About 65 percent of boys and girls living in rural areas join a 4-H Club at some time in their life. But at any one time only about 18 percent are active. What accounts for the difference? Dropouts, or those who do not reenroll. Our recruiting methods are excellent. But follow-through with a good, attractive program of 4-H experiences and program content needs attention.

This problem of low reenrollment bothered the Western Region 4-H Club Studies Committee. Members were:

C. O. Youngstrom, associate director, Idaho, chairman.

Mae Baird, field studies and planning specialist, Wyoming; now State home demonstration agent, Kansas.

H. R. Baker, assistant director, Arizona.

Cecil G. Staver, State 4-H Club leader, Colorado.

M. Elmina White, former assistant director, Washington.

Mrs. Laurel K. Sabrosky, extension analyst, USDA.

This group decided to study several counties with high reenrollments of first-year members to learn reasons for their success. These case studies were made in:

Cache County, Utah, by Dr. R. W. Roskelley, sociologist, Utah State University, Logan, Utah.

Sheridan county, Wyo., by Mae Baird (identified above), Extension Service, University of Wyoming, Laramie, Wyo.

Rosebud County, Mont., by W. G. Stucky, county agent leader, Extension Service, Montana State College (now associate director, Nevada), and Dr. E. J. Niederfrank, extension sociologist, USDA.

Bingham County, Idaho, by J. W. Barber, county agent leader, Extension Service, University of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho now retired, and Dr. Niederfrank.

This committee found 15 important factors related to high reenrollment in these counties. They found others too, but all or most of the reporters named the 15 listed in this booklet. Other studies confirm these findings. No one knows yet which factors are most important. But if you try to get these things going, your reenrollment is sure to start climbing!

How many of these can you use?

Work up a balanced program for every club meeting.

Business session.

Information and subject matter.

Recreation and refreshments.

Give the information and subject matter part the major time, but do not forget the others.

Make the meetings "good."

Have the members conduct their own meetings and actively plan their 4-H work during the meetings.

Give every member a chance to participate in the meetings.

See that the club program is well planned in advance.

This includes both the club meeting programs and the activity program.

Know *beforehand* the major things the club is going to do and who will do them.

Club members will enjoy having the chance to decide on "how," whenever possible, and on extra things.

Develop a variety of activities.

The club meeting is the core of the work, but surround it with lots of things to do!

Demonstrations.

Parties.

Exhibits.

Nature hikes.

Talks.

Community service activities.

Have good-sized clubs.

If your club has only 5 or 6 members, the boys and girls are limited in the discussion, service, and play activities they can take part in.

Fifteen to twenty members make a strong club.

Provide something to do the year round.

Don't stop activity when the project stops. Maybe you can arrange a summer picnic or two, a Christmas party, or planning meetings.

It is easier to keep a club going than to start anew each year.

Help all young people earn money from their projects.

Keep cash awards within reasonable limits for effort expended. Do not limit awards to top prizewinners.

Earning their own money builds responsibility.

Devote time and effort to becoming well trained.

You will enjoy your job more if you do. The returns in successful club work and able club members are noticeable.

Leaders can help decide what is needed in the way of training.

Generate community spirit.

Help club members realize they live in a community. Help the community remember it has a 4-H Club. A significant community project carried out is good for both club members and community.

Talk 4-H; advertise 4-H.

Let 4-H honor the community and the individuals within it. In return the community and the individuals within it will honor 4-H.

Recognize good work and achievement.

Local recognition of both members and leaders is important; so is the opportunity to work toward recognition at the county fair.

Establish prestige in the home community; provide a chance to compete at county level.

Help parents feel important.

Consult them before the club is organized. If the club is already organized, talk to them, meet with them, honor them—ask them for their ideas and use their ideas.

Let parents realize you know they are important.

Secure other sponsors for the club.

Local organizations are ready and willing to sponsor clubs, to sponsor special events, to support a training program.

They will help you to establish the position of 4-H Club work in the community and make it a recognized program.

Expand publicity beyond your project winners.

They are important, yes, but give primary publicity to the club itself, and to its other activities.

It will help give the members prestige in the community.

Fit your club projects into the overall county extension program.

Leaders in the agricultural and home economics fields enjoy helping plan a 4-H Club program.

The 4-H Club program is a part of Extension Service work.

Develop an organized 4-H council or planning group on the county level.

Meet with it regularly, several times a year. It is better if it includes recognized leaders in the agricultural and home economics fields.

The 4-H Club program belongs to the people.



N-17803.

A 4-H Club member adapts her projects to the needs of her family.



N-17930.

Above. A local banker advises a 4-H member on ways to finance his projects and save his earnings.

Below. A first aid demonstration is one of many activities in 4-H meetings.

N-17488.



A variety of activities, well planned in advance, keep members keenly interested.
(Ill. Ext. Service.)

Five essentials for **HIGH REenrollments**

- ①** Have good local meetings.
- ②** Provide a year-round program.
- ③** Enlist active parent cooperation.
- ④** Extend club activities into the community.
- ⑤** Earn support of the community and its leaders.